Discussion on Insurgency in Assam with Political Groups

1432. SHRI PRAKANTA WARISA: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have started or are likely to start deliberations with various political groups for permanent solution to the present insurgency problems being faced by the people of Assam;

(b) if so, the present status of discussion; and

(c) if not, the reaction of Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI I.D. SWAMI): (a) to (c) The Government is in constant touch with various political parties/groups with a view to resolve the insurgency problem in Assam.

Prison Reforms

1433. SHRI E. BALANANDAN: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that riot incident in Chennai Central Prison on November 17, 1999 is a reminder of the not infesting the prison system; and

(b) if so, what steps Government have taken to introduce comprehensive prison reforms and to bring the prison administration in line with modern conditions?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI I.D. SWAMI): (a) and (b) The Government of Tamil Nadu has appointed a Commission of Inquiry to inquire into the incidents of violence and rioting that took place inside the Central Prison, Chennai, on 17.11.1999. The Commission will, *inter alia,* inquire into the causes and circumstances that led to violence and make suggestions for improvement of prisons and prison reforms.

'Prisons' is a State subject as per the Seventh Schedule to the Constitution of India. However, the Central Government has been providing financial assistance to the State Governments for improving their prison infrastructure. Further, in line with contemporary thinking in penology, the Central Government has prepared a draft of the Model Prisons (Management) Bill, which has been circulated to the State Governments for their views.